

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 670

By Cobb J

A RESOLUTION to create a special joint committee to study the feasibility of constructing a Tennessee River bridge in Hamilton County to connect the communities of Soddy-Daisy and Harrison.

WHEREAS, Soddy-Daisy and Harrison are two of the fastest growing communities in Hamilton County, both in terms of population and economy; and

WHEREAS, Hamilton County is divided by the Tennessee River from State Route 153 north to State Route 60, a distance of approximately 20 miles, with no connecting bridge, and thus the communities of Soddy-Daisy and Harrison are also divided by the river; and

WHEREAS, there is a great need for a bridge spanning the Tennessee River to connect these vibrant communities and spur even greater economic prosperity and growth in Hamilton County and the region; in fact, the need for such a bridge was recognized and provided for in the Department of Transportation's 20-year plan in the early 1970s; and

WHEREAS, the area north of State Route 153 is the fastest growing segment of Hamilton County; 70% of recent lot development has been north of State Route 153, and 85% of the vacant land available for development in the county is located north of such route; and

WHEREAS, as a result of this exponential growth, traffic is now extremely heavy on State Route 153, a problem that is exacerbated by the presence of more than 10 traffic lights on State Route 153 between Chickamauga Dam and U.S. Highway 27 and the primarily commercial development north of Chickamauga Dam on such route; and

WHEREAS, the construction of a bridge spanning the Tennessee River in this area of Hamilton County and the necessary connecting roads would work to realign traffic on State Route 153; aid development north of such route; and reroute heavy truck traffic away from downtown Chattanooga by providing a new connector to Interstate 75; and

WHEREAS, the construction of such a bridge would serve to connect State Route 111, State Route 58, U. S. Highway 27, and Interstate 75 at the 20-mile marker of Interstate 75, which is designated as Corridor K; and

WHEREAS, the construction of such a bridge would result in greater efficiency in the transportation of students by local school systems, whose buses must now leave Hamilton County to cross the Tennessee River, and would provide additional safety relief from Sequoyah Nuclear Plant; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that there is hereby created a special joint committee to study the feasibility of constructing a new bridge in Hamilton County to span the Tennessee River for the purpose of connecting the communities of Soddy-Daisy and Harrison.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee shall consist of the following six (6) members:

(a) Two (2) members of the House of Representatives who represent the legislative districts in which the proposed Tennessee River bridge project would be located;

(b) One (1) member of the House of Representatives at-large, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(c) Two (2) members of the Senate who represent Hamilton County; and

(d) One (1) member of the Senate at-large, to be appointed by the Speaker of the Senate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Department of Transportation, Hamilton County government, and all other appropriate state and local agencies shall provide assistance to the special joint committee upon request of the chair.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all legislative members of the special joint committee who are duly elected members of the General Assembly shall remain members of such committee until the committee reports its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the special joint committee shall be convened by the member with the most years of continuous service in the General Assembly, and at its first meeting shall elect a chair, vice-chair, and such other officers the committee deems necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the special joint committee shall timely report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the One Hundred Fifth General Assembly no later than February 1, 2008, at which time the committee shall cease to exist.